

JOHN H CHAFEE

BLACKSTONE RIVER VALLEY

NATIONAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR

“The commission, its staff, and the network of partners are helping to build an understanding of how to conserve important natural and cultural heritage in lived-in landscapes. They are fostering a partnership culture in the Blackstone Valley that is leading to conservation of an important story and unique resources. At its core, their efforts revolve around connecting people to heritage and place, thereby kindling a sense of stewardship. In this process, shared heritage becomes a bridge between past, present and future.”

Citizen quote from ‘Reflecting on the Past, Looking to the Future: Sustainability Study Report for the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor.’



2007 ANNUAL REPORT

CORRIDOR COMMISSION

OFFICERS

CHAIR

Edward Sanderson,
Executive Director
Rhode Island Historical
Preservation & Heritage
Commission

VICE CHAIR

Donna Williams
Conservation Advocacy
Coordinator, Massachusetts
Audubon Society
Broad Meadow Brook
Wildlife Sanctuary

SECRETARY

Senator Richard T. Moore
Massachusetts State Senate
Second Worcester District

TREASURER

Michael Cassidy, Director
Department of Planning
and Redevelopment
City of Pawtucket, RI

IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR

Louise M. Redding, CPA,
Uxbridge, MA

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Dennis R. Reidenbach
Regional Director
Northeast Region

MEMBERS

Matthew Amorello
Grafton, MA

Kenneth Bianchi
North Smithfield, RI

Dr. William Anker
Rhode Island

Rick Sullivan
Commissioner
Massachusetts DCR

Paul F. Clancy, Jr., Councilor
Worcester City Council

Mary K. Connor
Providence, RI

Daniel O'Connell
Secretary to the Executive
Office of Housing and
Economic Development

Chair's Message

The Blackstone Valley is a wonderfully integrated system of waterways, transportation corridors, villages, urban centers and rural communities. Its people and communities are connected through a shared history and economic underpinnings that have shaped the landscape over the years and one that continues to set an example for regional planning and preservation.

Over the past twenty years, the Blackstone Commission has endeavored to expand on the valley's interconnectedness by supporting programs that integrate many elements in order to reinforce that sense of continuity and wholeness throughout the valley. This regional approach has strengthened our shared resolve to preserve our heritage so that future generations will understand the Valley's significance in the development of our nation.

As we recap the past year, look for the many ways that you are connected to others and think of ways that your efforts can be connected to others in the future. For the past is ever present in the future, and the future is yours.

Ted Sanderson, Chair



PHOTO BY ELECTA KANE TRITSCH

HISTORY, ECONOMIC HISTORY, CULTURAL LANDSCAPES AND ARCHITECTURE WILL SHARE THEIR INSIGHTS ON THE VALLEY'S NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE. THE SUITABILITY AND FEASIBILITY OF INCLUSION IN THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM WILL BE ASSESSED AND A VARIETY OF MANAGEMENT OPTIONS EXPLORED.

DURING THE COURSE OF THE PROJECT, THE STUDY TEAM WILL HOLD PUBLIC MEETINGS, MAINTAIN A PROJECT WEBSITE AND PRODUCE AND DISTRIBUTE NEWSLETTERS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS TO KEEP THE PUBLIC INFORMED OF THE PROCESS AND TO SOLICIT PUBLIC INPUT. THE TEAM WILL ALSO PRODUCE A DRAFT STUDY REPORT THAT WILL BE MADE WIDELY AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION AND COMMENT. FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT THE PROJECT WEB SITE AT WWW.NPS.GOV/BLAC. PLEASE SHARE ANY OF YOUR THOUGHTS ABOUT THE STUDY WITH US BY CONTACTING ELLEN CARLSON, PROJECT MANAGER AT (617) 223-5048 OR ELLEN_CARLSON@NPS.GOV.

Executive Director's Message

From its beginning, the Heritage Corridor has been a catalyst for historic and cultural preservation, environmental restoration and community revitalization throughout the Blackstone Valley. Often, this meant providing the initial vision or funding, at other times simply bringing parties together to pair vision with resources, creativity with experience, and leaders with supporters. Our great fortune has been to work with so many partners who themselves provide vision, take initiative, and believe that failure is not an option. The Corridor Commission continues to provide leadership in many areas, but it is just as often needed in the support role.

We were able to continue in these roles successfully in 2007, notwithstanding prolonged uncertainty about funding, which ultimately fell far short of authorized levels. This could have had a disruptive effect but the Commission and staff responded with more energy and creativity, not less. We are counting on the strength of our partnership approach to continue our ambitious projects, from completing the bike path and cleaning up the river to helping communities plan for growth that embraces and preserves the valley's heritage instead of demolishing it or paving it over. We are counting on you, and hope you continue to count on us.

Jan Reitsma, Executive Director

THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE (NPS) NORTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE, WITH SUPPORT FROM THE CORRIDOR COMMISSION, HAS BEGUN WORK ON THE **BLACKSTONE RIVER VALLEY SPECIAL RESOURCE STUDY (SRS)**. FOCUSING ON SITES AND LANDSCAPE FEATURES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE BLACKSTONE VALLEY AS THE BIRTHPLACE OF THE AMERICAN INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION, THE SRS WILL EXPLORE THE POTENTIAL FOR A PERMANENT NPS PRESENCE IN THE BLACKSTONE VALLEY AND COULD RESULT IN THE CREATION OF A NEW UNIT OF THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM.

THE SRS WILL BUILD ON THE CORRIDOR'S PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS, WHILE TAKING A FRESH LOOK AT THE VALLEY'S INTRICATE MOSAIC OF IMPORTANT STRUCTURES, SITES AND LANDSCAPES. EXPERTS IN THE FIELDS OF INDUSTRIAL

Saul Kaplan, Director
Rhode Island Economic
Development Corp.

Dr. Robert Billington
President, Blackstone Valley
Tourism Council

Patricia Mehrtens
Burrillville, RI

Ms. Brona Simon,
Executive Director
Massachusetts Historic
Commission

Burton Stallwood
Federal Marshall
Rhode Island

Dr. W. Michael Sullivan
Director, Rhode Island
Department of
Environmental Management

CORRIDOR STAFF

Jan Reitsma
Executive Director

Thomas Ross
Deputy Director &
Acting Executive Director

Elizabeth McConnell
Chief of Administration

Halford Welch
Special Projects

Diane Keith
Landscape Architect

Joanna Doherty
Community Planner

Mark Jewell
Outdoor Recreation Planner

Chuck Arning, Lead Ranger

Suzanne Buchanan
Park Ranger

Peter Coffin, Park Ranger

Ray Boswell, Park Ranger

Kevin Klyberg, Park Ranger

Barbara Dixon
Events Coordinator

Charlene Berry-Jensen
Cooperative Agreement
Specialist

Pauline Lozeau, Secretary

Meghan Couture
Receptionist

River Recovery – Headwaters to Bay

Through a variety of new and on-going initiatives, the Blackstone River Coalition, its partners, and others throughout the watershed moved us closer to our goal of a clean Blackstone River by 2015. At the headwaters in Worcester, the BRC rallied tremendous support for strict nutrient limits for the Upper Blackstone Water Pollution Abatement District's new permit. Reducing nutrients not only from treatment plants but also from stormwater and polluted runoff will improve water quality and increase recreational opportunities – priority goals of the BRC and the Heritage Corridor Commission.

These nutrients are but two of the parameters that the BRC's 78 volunteer water quality monitors test for at 81 sites throughout the watershed on a monthly basis from April through November. Hosts for the monitoring teams are the Blackstone Headwaters Coalition, the Blackstone River Watershed Association, the Blackstone River Watershed Council/Friends of the Blackstone, and Mass Audubon. The backbone of the **Campaign for a Fishable/Swimmable Blackstone River by 2015**, the program now has four years of quality data, which Coordinator Tammy Gilpatrick has condensed into annual Water Quality Report Cards. To see how our waterways measure up visit the BRC's website at www.zaptheblackstone.org, and click on What We're Doing.

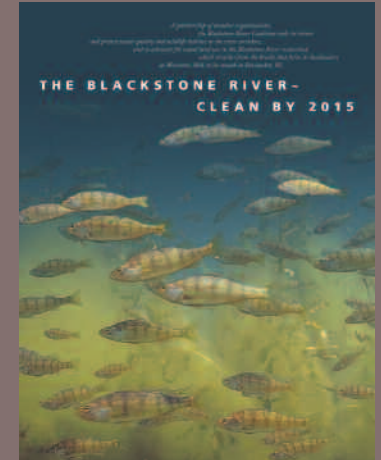
Everyone, homeowners, small farm owners, horse owners, business owners, town/city government, and developers can help improve our report card grades by reducing stormwater impacts. The BRC's "Tackling Stormwater in the Blackstone River Watershed" initiative brings this message home with its excellent new publications:

- » A Homeowner's Guide to Protecting Water Quality in the Blackstone River Watershed
- » A Small Farm Owner's Guide to Protecting Water Quality in the Blackstone Valley
- » A Horse Owner's Guide to Protecting Water Quality in the Blackstone Valley
- » In Business for the Blackstone
- » Blackstone Valley Guide to Low Impact Development Practices

These, and "The Blackstone River ~ Clean by 2015" publication, can all be downloaded from the BRC's website www.zaptheblackstone.org, What We're Doing.

Proof of the continuous progress we're making is in the project to restore anadromous fish populations by means of fish passages over the lower four dams on the Blackstone. Thanks to sufficiently improved water quality and the efforts of Frank Geary, the Blackstone River Watershed Council/Friends of the Blackstone, Narragansett Bay Estuary Program, RIDEM, NRCS, USFWS, dam owners and many others, ground breaking for the first **fish ladder** is scheduled for late 2008.

For more information about the Campaign, please contact BRC Coordinator Peter Coffin at peter.coffin@zaptheblackstone.org.



PHOSPHORUS AND NITROGEN PROMOTE EXCESSIVE GROWTH OF ALGAE AND OTHER AQUATIC PLANTS, AND WHEN THEY DIE, DECOMPOSITION REDUCES OXYGEN VITAL TO A HEALTHY AQUATIC SYSTEM.



THE CORRIDOR COMMISSION IS ALWAYS CONCERNED ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE FOOTPRINT THAT WE LEAVE ON THE EARTH. THE PAPER IN THIS REPORT IS CERTIFIED 25% POST-CONSUMER RECYCLED AND SOY-BASED INKS HAVE BEEN USED. IN ORDER TO MINIMIZE THE NUMBER OF PRINTED PIECES, WE HAVE MADE THIS REPORT AVAILABLE AS A DOWNLOAD FROM OUR WEBSITE. PLEASE RECYCLE OR PASS ALONG TO A FRIEND OF THE BLACKSTONE.

So much is happening in and around Worcester that we just had to show it off. Working closely with the Worcester Historical Museum, the City of Worcester and many other partners, the Commission designed and printed “**Worcester Connections**” a visual representation of the more than \$1.3 billion in public, private, and non-profit funded partnership projects that are changing the face of Worcester. Pick up your copy at Worcester City Hall, the Worcester Historical Museum, or the Woonsocket Depot.

Several of the projects depicted in “Worcester Connections” come together at Quinsigamond Village, the site of the future **Worcester Visitor Center**. While the visitor center project is progressing on schedule, the new Route 146 segments opened ahead of schedule with many accolades to MassHighway for a job well done. Included in the **Route 146 project** are site improvements at the Washburn-Moen building and development of 3.2 miles of bikeway from Quinsigamond Village to Route 122A in Millbury. The bikeway is slated to extend north to Union Station, thus providing a pedestrian and alternate transportation connection between Quinsigamond Village and the City proper.

And what happenings there were around Union Station in September when the waters of the **Blackstone Canal** once again drew crowds of enthusiastic supporters heralding the rebirth of the Canal District in Worcester. A great collaboration of carpenters from Local 107 of the New England Region Carpenters Union together with a crew from the Worcester Department of Public Works and CanalFest volunteers transformed Harding Street into an oasis of water and plants in the heart of Worcester. In its third year, the event drew thousands of people who enjoyed a day full of culture, ethnic food and dancing.

MassHighway also announced that \$4.6 million in state funds earmarked for the **Blackstone River Bikeway** was awarded in a contract with Parsons Engineering for the design of a 16.5 mile segment of the

inter-modal path through the towns of Uxbridge, Northbridge, Grafton, Sutton and Millbury.

Other ways of exploring the Blackstone Valley are cropping up by way of new river access points and **Paddle Club** offerings. Thanks to a burgeoning cadre of volunteers, folks traversed the Quinsigamond River, Indian Lake, Blackstone River in Grafton, Manchaug Pond, and Lackey Dam area and Meadow Pond in Whitinsville.

And, how about those volunteers! Folks from around the valley logged more than 51,000 **Volunteer in Parks (VIP)** hours at historic sites and events, organizing, lending a helping hand, developing and presenting walking tours, and making it possible to offer a broad range of exciting programs throughout the valley.

This year’s **Walkabout series** saw the debut of new programs created and presented by Corridor VIPs that had participated in a Certified Interpretive Guide training course in 2006. Interpretive walks were held during the summer at locations around the valley and included a variety of themes like Hopedale’s

North to South and East to West around the Blackstone Valley people and communities are coming together to understand and preserve their shared heritage. The Blackstone Valley has reclaimed its place in America’s history by building on, and learning from the past, working in unison to utilize new technology and methods to ensure that the environment and economy continue to be a strong foundation for the future of the Blackstone Valley.

vibrant history from religious commune to factory town; Whitinsville’s role as a key industrial center that produced the textile machines that kept other towns working; and Farnumsville, part of a chain of mill villages along the Blackstone in South Grafton.

The Commission’s staff organized **Great Tours!**, a popular one-day workshop presented by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as an opportunity for heritage sites and volunteers to learn how to meet the interpretive needs of visitors. This May workshop was held at Asa Waters Mansion and focused on creating thematic tours at historic sites. Great Tours! is sponsored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the American Association for State and Local History, the Corridor Commission and funded in part by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

WORCESTER • LEICESTER GRAFTON • UPTON • HOPE DALE

PARTNERS AT WATERS FARM PRESERVATION, INC. CELEBRATED THE PROPERTY'S 250TH BIRTHDAY DURING A BEAUTIFUL WEEKEND IN AUGUST. HORSE DRAWN WAGONS JOURNEYED AROUND LAKE MANCHAUG, THE WATERS FAMILY HELD THEIR REUNION, AND BACK-TO-BACK CONCERTS, FOOD, GAMES, EXHIBITS, AND FUN ROUNDED OUT THE SELECTION OF EVENTS. THE COMMISSION PRESENTED PAMELA GURNEY FARNHAM WITH A FRAMED CERTIFICATE IN RECOGNITION OF HER LATE FATHER, RALPH "BUD" GURNEY AND THE WATERS FARM VOLUNTEERS FOR THEIR COMMITMENT TO THE PRESERVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY OF THE UNIQUE BLACKSTONE RIVER VALLEY FARM AND HOMESTEAD.



PHOTO BY LISA MOSCZYNSKI

THE CORRIDOR COMMISSION OFFERED A TWO-DAY, "BLACKSTONE CANAL SYMPOSIUM" IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE COLLEGE OF THE HOLY CROSS, WORCESTER HISTORICAL MUSEUM AND THE ANCIENT ORDER OF HIBERNIANS. THE SYMPOSIUM GAVE PARTICIPANTS THE OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS HISTORICAL RESEARCH AND TO CLOSELY REVIEW PRESERVATION EFFORTS AND PROPOSED INITIATIVES WITH CANAL EXPERTS.



ON-SITE FIELD VISITS DEMONSTRATED THE CONSTRAINTS AND POTENTIAL OF CANAL PRESERVATION EFFORTS.



SHARING THE WONDERFUL RESOURCES OF THE BLACKSTONE RIVER VALLEY WITH RESIDENTS AND VISITORS TO THE AREA.



THE CANALFEST COMMITTEE AND THE CORRIDOR COMMISSION ARE WORKING WITH THE CITY TO CREATE A PARK THAT WILL INCLUDE A DAYLIGHTED SEGMENT OF THE BLACKSTONE CANAL ALONG HARDING STREET, THE INTENDED PATH OF THE BLACKSTONE RIVER BIKEWAY.



PHOTO BY ERIKA SIDOR

FROM MAY THROUGH AUGUST, THE BLACKSTONE VALLEY PADDLE CLUB MEMBERS AND GUESTS EXPLORED RIVERWAYS AROUND THE VALLEY AND HELD EVENING TRAINING SESSIONS FOR PADDLERS AND FUTURE LEADERS. TO LEARN MORE, GO TO WWW.RICKA.ORG.



THE ANNUAL WALKABOUT SERIES FEATURED PROGRAMS BY NATIONAL PARK SERVICE RANGERS AS WELL AS VOLUNTEERS FROM THE BLACKSTONE VALLEY INTERPRETERS NETWORK (BVIN). THE BVIN BRINGS TOGETHER GUIDES FROM THE REGION TO SHARE STORIES, HIGHLIGHT VALLEY SITES AND TRADE SOLUTIONS. THEY AIM TO CREATE NEW AND INNOVATIVE WAYS OF

A **Four Town** committee from Douglas, Sutton, Northbridge, and Uxbridge has set the bar high for other valley communities through their regional planning efforts for a 1700 acre parcel along Route 146. The area is currently zoned for mixed use and spans multiple jurisdictions, making coordinated development difficult. Town officials and residents have invested considerable hours on this collective planning process, which has resulted in the development of a concept plan that addresses appropriate locations for new access roadways, infrastructure to support new development, types of desired uses that will balance preserving natural resources and generating economic development, and the inter-municipal cooperation that is needed to facilitate development of this new vision.

The Commission partnered with a broad-based coalition to examine the potential for the complete or partial removal of an often forgotten 1830 granite dam built to provide water power for a satinette mill on the Blackstone River. The coalition included Riverways (a program of the Massachusetts Department of Fish & Game), Mass Audubon, National Grid, Coastal America (a corporate wetlands philanthropy), and the Town of Millbury. This program is emerging as a model for how to study the impacts of **removing a dam** on a heavily industrialized river. Removing unused impediments of this nature will allow for safer and more enjoyable use of the river for recreation.

Ten Blackstone Valley communities in Massachusetts participated in the **Heritage Landscape Inventory** project, a partnership between the Heritage Corridor Commission, Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and Quinebaug-Shetucket Heritage Corridor, Inc. Hundreds of special places were identified by valley residents and over 50 significant and/or vulnerable landscapes were surveyed ranging from farmsteads to railroad beds. Each community received a reconnaissance report which outlines the community's landscape history, describes high priority heritage landscapes and threats to their preservation, discusses broader land planning issues and includes

recommendations about how to protect its high priority landscapes. A unique aspect of this project was the partnership between the Blackstone and Quinebaug-Shetucket Heritage Corridor that border each other. This collaboration will continue with a joint education initiative to provide municipal staff, volunteers and community members with training related to landscape preservation in the two heritage areas.

Three historic water control structures at the **Blackstone River**

and **Canal Heritage State Park** in Uxbridge, MA have been restored. The gates, which had been inoperable for 20 years, are functional once again, allowing water to be maintained at optimal levels through the canal.

The restoration process was extensive: the water level in the canal was lowered, the gates were disassembled and their metal components were repaired and/or re-cast off-site. Deteriorated concrete was patched, masonry was repaired and all of the timber components were replaced. The project was funded with \$238,000

The foundation of the Blackstone Heritage Corridor is its communities and their shared history and culture. Preserving the remaining landscape has been a unifying force and a vital element in the preparation of current and future development strategies as communities begin to collaborate on regional planning and preservation efforts.

from the Commission, \$238,000 from the Office of Public Private Partnerships in the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, and \$312,000 (design and construction) from the Department of Conservation and Recreation. A big “hats off!” goes to all of the parties involved in the restoration of this significant resource.

In November the Commission sponsored a **history conference** titled, “Mill Village: Industry, Transformation & Power.” Led by the well known and highly engaging Dr. Joyce Appleby, Professor Emerita at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), a wide ranging group of scholars met to discuss industrialization and the development of the mill village. Panel discussions included topics such as the true impact of Samuel Slater, understanding the industrial landscape of the mill village, labor and life in the mill village and a contemporary view of the mill village today. Scholars from a variety of disciplines joined with participants to share insights to the story of industrialization here and throughout the United States. Sponsoring partners included Rhode Island College, Slater Mill Historic Site and DSF Group.

MENDON • UXBRIDGE • BLACKSTONE • WOONSON



PHOTO BY LISA MOSCZYNSKI

IN THE 1850s, THE
SEGMENT OF THE
BLACKSTONE CANAL

THAT RUNS THROUGH THE BLACKSTONE RIVER AND CANAL
HERITAGE STATE PARK IN UXBRIDGE WAS CONVERTED INTO
A MILL RACE TO POWER MOSES TAFT'S CENTRAL WOOLEN MILL,
NOW KNOWN AS THE STANLEY WOOLEN MILL.



OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS,
THE TOWN OF SUTTON HAS WORKED
CLOSELY WITH MASSHIGHWAY,
THE COMMISSION AND ITS CITIZENS
IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF **TRICENTENNIAL PARK**. LOCATED ON THE
BANKS OF THE BLACKSTONE RIVER AT BLACKSTONE STREET, THE PARK WILL
INCLUDE A WALKING PATH, CANOE ACCESS AND RIVER OVERLOOK AREA,
PICNIC AND SEATING AREAS, LANDSCAPING, AND PARKING. THE COMMISSION
CONTRIBUTED \$45,000 IN DESIGN FUNDS, AND \$240,000 IN MASSHIGHWAY
ENHANCEMENT FUNDS HAS BEEN DESIGNATED TO BUILD THE PARK.



DIGNITARIES, FRIENDS, PATRONS
AND STAFF AT THE MUSEUM
OF WORK AND CULTURE CAPPED
OFF A DECADE OF OPERATION
WITH A GALA ON OCTOBER 10TH
WHERE THE MUSEUM
ANNOUNCED AN AMBITIOUS
CAPITAL CAMPAIGN, PLANS
FOR NEW EXHIBITS, AND OTHER
EXCITING THINGS TO COME
OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS.



PHOTO BY MFONTAINE PHOTOGRAPHY



PHOTO BY ANNE S. MAZUR

THE MASSACHUSETTS
COMMUNITIES OF
DOUGLAS, GRAFTON,
HOPEDALE, LEICESTER,

MENDON, MILLBURY, MILLVILLE, NORTHBRIDGE,
SUTTON, AND UXBRIDGE PARTICIPATED IN THE
HERITAGE LANDSCAPE INVENTORY.

The year 2007 marked the 200th anniversary of the opening of the **Slatersville Mill**, the centerpiece of America's first planned industrial mill village. Last fall the newly renovated Halstead at Slatersville Mill opened for business, with apartments now filling the space where cotton was once spun, bringing to a successful conclusion the preservation and rehabilitation of the Slatersville Mill - a goal that the Corridor Commission has supported for more than twenty years. Commission staff celebrated Slatersville's bicentennial by offering a **Ranger Walkabout**, hosting a visit from the **Paddle Club** and highlighting the village on bus tours offered during the **Mill Village Symposium** hosted in November.

Participants in the UniBank **Greenway Challenge** enjoyed a beautiful fall day in September for the 7th annual race. They covered 54 miles from the I-295 Blackstone River State Park Visitors Center in Lincoln, RI north to the finish line at Waters Farm in Sutton, MA. The event continues to raise awareness of the many recreational opportunities in the Blackstone River Valley. For more on this year's event, including results, please visit www.greenwaychallenge.org.

Just in time for the Labor Day weekend, the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) welcomed Federal, State and local officials to the Blackstone Valley to celebrate the completion of the new Berkeley Bridge and Martin Street Canal Bridge and the reopening of the **Blackstone River Bikeway** in Lincoln/Cumberland. The bridges which carry Martin Street over the Blackstone River and the Blackstone Canal date back to 1900. In November, RIDOT opened the newest two mile stretch of the Blackstone River Bikeway which begins in Manville and ends at the Woonsocket Water Treatment Plant. Pedestrians and cyclists may now travel nearly ten consecutive miles on the Blackstone River Bikeway in Rhode Island.

The Commission's efforts to preserve the mill fabric of the Blackstone Valley has been bolstered by the completion of a **Mill Building Survey** by the Economic Development Foundation of Rhode Island. The survey documents those mill buildings in Northern Rhode Island that were constructed prior to 1954 and are currently being used, or are available

for industrial and commercial purposes. The Commission hopes to expand the survey to include the Corridor communities in Massachusetts in the near future. To obtain information about properties on the survey, contact the Economic Development Foundation at 401-658-1050 or view their website at www.edf-ri.com.

Representatives and friends from heritage sites across the Blackstone Valley kicked off the **Footsteps in History** weekend with Bob Largess of Sutton driving a restored stagecoach from Providence to Worcester. It was the first time a stagecoach made the journey in 180 years. The coach arrived at Millbury's Asa Waters Mansion on October 3rd, to greet docents, interpreters and staff from many of the participating heritage sites gathered to celebrate the program's third year. For more program details and information on individual heritage sites, including wonderful pictures, please visit www.footstepsinhistory.com.

The Cornerstone of the Blackstone Valley is its people. People who value their community and work to preserve a way of life that protects the values that make a community home. People who enjoy bringing the Valley's past to a new generation so that they, too can understand the value of our history and culture.

Construction has begun at the **Blackstone Gorge Overlook** for improvements adjacent to the scenic historic dam. The project is a result of a partnership between the Heritage Corridor, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (MADCR) and the Blackstone River Watershed Association (BRWA). The "facelift" at the Gorge includes a new accessible trail, slope stabilization, river access improvements, landscaping, fencing and informational signs for the public. Additional landscaping will be added in the spring just in time for the new paddling season. Interpretive signs will inform the public about the history of the area, and provide paddlers with information about the Blackstone River. This work will complement the parking area improvements completed by MADCR and the Corridor in 2002.

The Town of Burrillville in partnership with the Corridor Commission officially opened the **Pascoag Riverwalk** in the village of Pascoag with a ribbon cutting ceremony in December. The Commission contributed \$40,000 toward the project, the Town contributed \$156,565 and secured \$175,000 from Rhode Island's Department of Environmental Management and the Levy Foundation.

NORTH SMITHFIELD • BURRILLVILLE • CENTRAL FALLS • PAWTUCKET • E



NEARLY 10 CONSECUTIVE MILES OF THE BLACKSTONE RIVER BIKEWAY PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR HEALTHY RECREATION AND EXPLORING MANY OF THE VALLEY'S HIDDEN TREASURES.



THE SEVENTH ANNUAL UNIBANK GREENWAY CHALLENGE CONTINUES TO RAISE AWARENESS OF THE MANY RECREATIONAL RESOURCES IN THE BLACKSTONE RIVER VALLEY. PICTURED ARE CORPORATE CUP WINNERS, MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.

2007 HERALDED THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VILLAGE OF SLATERSVILLE – AMERICA'S FIRST PLANNED MILL VILLAGE. THROUGH COMBINED PRESERVATION EFFORTS, ITS HISTORIC CHARACTER AND CHARM IS ENJOYED BY MANY.



PHOTO BY MFONTAINE PHOTOGRAPHY

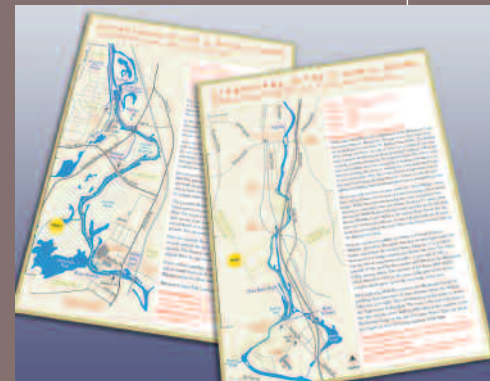


FOOTSTEPS IN HISTORY WAS CREATED AS A VALLEY-WIDE OPEN HOUSE TO COLLECTIVELY CELEBRATE HISTORIC PLACES

THROUGH MANY EVENTS AROUND THE BLACKSTONE VALLEY IN ONE WEEKEND. OVER 75 HERITAGE AND HISTORIC SITES PARTICIPATED IN THIS COLUMBUS DAY WEEKEND EXTRAVAGANZA.

STAFF AND PARTNERS OF THE CORRIDOR WERE RECOGNIZED FOR EXCELLENCE AT THE EASTERN RIVERS SUMMIT IN SHEPHERDSTOWN, WEST VIRGINIA WHERE THEY RECEIVED AN EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATIONS AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT THAT

READS: "IN RECOGNITION OF INTERPRETIVE AND TRIP PLANNING MATERIALS TO MAKE THE BLACKSTONE RIVER MORE ACCESSIBLE." THE AWARD WINNING GUIDE MAPS ARE COLLECTIVELY TITLED: BLACKSTONE RIVER TOURS.



TRANSITIONS



Larry Gall

Lawrence D. Gall, Interim Executive Director of the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission retired from the National Park Service on January 4, 2007 after more than 30 years with the National Park Service. The Commission, staff and partners wish him all the best in his retirement!



Mark Jewell

After six years as an Outdoor Recreation Planner for the Heritage Corridor, Mark left in mid-August for a position at MassHighway.

8th Annual John H. Chafee Heritage Awards

The Heritage Award was established to honor the late U.S. Senator John H. Chafee's legacy of environmental stewardship through recognition of individuals or groups whose active involvement in projects, programs, and institutions promote our cultural heritage, the preservation of the Corridor's natural areas and/or strive to enrich the quality of life in the Blackstone Valley. The 2006 recipients that were honored at the Commission's 2007 Annual Reception are:



Mayor James Doyle

Mayor James Doyle has been a strong supporter of the Heritage Corridor since becoming Mayor of Pawtucket in 1998. He is recognized for his support of the Pawtucket Visitor Center operations, the Greenway Challenge, and Leadership Blackstone Valley. Mayor Doyle has been instrumental in establishing an Arts & Entertainment District in the City, thereby creating a thriving arts Community in the Blackstone Valley.



Jim & Maggie Plasse

Jim & Maggie Plasse stepped up as volunteer community leaders to guide the Blackstone River Watershed Association through a complete renaissance over the past 4 years. They are recognized for their contributions to restoring the health of the Blackstone River, leading the efforts to remove 1200 tons of invasive Water Chestnuts from various sites, expanding public outreach and their strong participation in the Blackstone River Coalition.



Matthew Chamberlin (Student)

As a member of the Blackstone Valley Youth Leadership Academy, Matthew became civically engaged in various local and state organizations and helped the CorridorKeepers in their successful efforts to have the Corridor Commission reauthorized. Matthew is also recognized for his volunteer efforts with the Greenway Challenge and as an "emerging young leader" at Blackstone Millville Regional High School.



Gerald Gaudette Community Stewardship Award

Scott Rossiter

Scott Rossiter has demonstrated all the attributes the Heritage Corridor espouses. As owner of Lampin Corporation of Uxbridge, he sold the business to his employees and made many significant contributions to the community, including \$15,000 in annual grants to the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce Education Foundation, Inc. As the Past President of Alternatives, Inc. Board of Directors, he has helped lead their capital campaign to new heights for their renovation of the historic Whitin Mill property which will include green energy solutions. Lampin Corporation is among one of the first businesses to be recognized as being "in business for the Blackstone" by adopting the Blackstone River Coalition's suggestions.

Mark has been a driving force for developing the Blackstone River Bikeway and the Corridor sign system. Staff and Commissioners wish Mark success on any trail he decides to take from the Blackstone River Valley.



Thomas Ross

In December, Tom left the Blackstone Valley for his new post as Superintendent of Sagamore Hill National Historic Site in Oyster Bay, New York. While at the Corridor Tom served as Acting Executive Director and Deputy Director. Tom will be remembered for his enthusiasm, energy and commitment to the many partners in the Blackstone River Valley.



2007 Star Awards

The Corridor Star Awards recognize individuals or partner organizations that have accomplished good works on behalf of, or in partnership with, the Corridor Commission including outstanding service to the Corridor, its mission, goals, projects and programs. Nominations for the award are made by staff and Commissioners.

Mark Lynch
Sheila Carroll
Mary Lou Anderson
Frank Geary
East Providence Historical Society,
Edna Anness & Ginny Berwick
Burrillville Parks & Rec Dept., Cheri Hall
Canal Fest Committee
Bob Sutton

John O'Brien
Blackstone Valley Paddle Club
Museum of Work & Culture
Robert Largess
Shirley Mosczynski & Leon Mosczynski
Eugene Bernat, Cover Technologies
NE Council of Carpenters Union Local 107
Charlie Thompson



In Memoriam

BUD GURNEY

THE HERITAGE CORRIDOR COMMISSION IS SADDENED BY THE LOSS OF RALPH W. "BUD" GURNEY, JR. OF SUTTON, MASSACHUSETTS. BUD WAS A TIRELESS ADVOCATE FOR THE HERITAGE CORRIDOR AND WATERS FARM WHERE HE GUIDED THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MASTER PLAN AND CONTRIBUTED COUNTLESS HOURS OF VOLUNTEER TIME AS ITS PRESIDENT AND CHIEF ENGINEER. WE WILL ALL REMEMBER BUD FOR HIS ENTHUSIASM, DILIGENCE AND PERSEVERANCE IN THE PRESERVATION OF WATERS FARM AS A LIVING LEGACY WITHIN THE BLACKSTONE RIVER VALLEY NATIONAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR.

JOHN SPILLANE

JOHN SPILLANE, LONGTIME FRIEND OF THE CORRIDOR COMMISSION, PASSED AWAY ON CHRISTMAS DAY. HE WAS A MEMBER OF THE WORCESTER CANAL DISTRICT TASK FORCE AND INSTRUMENTAL IN SEEKING TO RE-OPEN THE WATERWAYS OF THE BLACKSTONE CANAL. SPILLANE WAS ACTIVE IN MANY CIVIC, CHARITABLE AND SOCIAL CAUSES. HE WAS ALSO A DYNAMIC FORCE WITHIN THE LEGAL AND BUSINESS FIELDS THROUGHOUT MASSACHUSETTS. SPILLANE'S PASSION AND ADVOCACY WILL BE SORELY MISSED BY THE CORRIDOR COMMISSION.

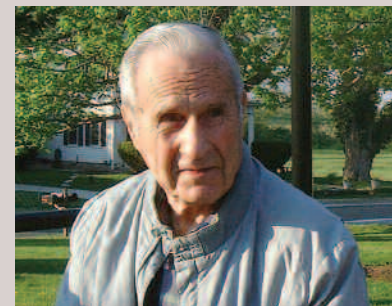




PHOTO BY MFONTAINE PHOTOGRAPHY

In June, over 150 Heritage Corridor friends gathered at Union Station in Worcester to mix and mingle and more importantly to celebrate a five year extension of the Corridor. US Congressman James McGovern was presented with a framed and signed copy of the Worcester Connections poster for all his efforts to support the Commission's reauthorization and Worcester's renaissance. Joining him were State Senators Richard T. Moore and Edward Augustus.



PHOTO BY ELLEN FITZPATRICK

US Congressman Richard Neal, State Senator Richard Moore, and State Representative Jennifer Callihan, congratulated Mass Department of Conservation and Recreation representatives Ken Foley and John Pelczarski for DCRs work on restoration the sluice gates at the Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park that will result in better water circulation and a greater ability to respond to high water events. To see the work for yourself, be sure to visit the park this summer!



US Senator Jack Reed and representatives from the Rhode Island Department of Transportation joined with local officials on November 5, 2007 to mark the opening of a 2-mile section of the Blackstone River Bikeway that connects the Town of Lincoln to the City of Woonsocket. A portion of the path also passes through the Town of North Smithfield. This represents the completion of more than nine miles of bikeway since the first segment opened in 1998.

Congressional Members

SENATOR EDWARD KENNEDY	MA	
SENATOR JOHN KERRY	MA	
SENATOR JACK REED	RI	
SENATOR SHELDON WHITEHOUSE	RI	
CONGRESSMAN JAMES MCGOVERN	MA	3RD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
CONGRESSMAN RICHARD NEAL	MA	2ND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
CONGRESSMAN JAMES LANGEVIN	RI	2ND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
CONGRESSMAN PATRICK KENNEDY	RI	1ST CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Fiscal Year 2007

THE COMMISSION IS SUPPORTED BY FEDERAL APPROPRIATIONS THAT LEVERAGE SUBSTANTIAL LOCAL, STATE AND PRIVATE FUNDS TO PURSUE A WIDE RANGE OF PROJECTS THAT BENEFIT THE BLACKSTONE VALLEY COMMUNITIES.

COMMISSION OPERATIONS: \$704,959

APPROPRIATIONS THROUGH NATIONAL RECREATION AND PRESERVATION PORTION OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE BUDGET TO SUPPORT COMMISSION OPERATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE SUPPORT: \$320,000

APPROPRIATIONS THROUGH THE OPERATION OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE BUDGET TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL SUPPORT FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION, PLANNING AND DESIGN, ENVIRONMENT, AND INTERPRETATION.

